

KEY TEXTS F PENTAGON'S VIETN

Following are the texts of key documents accompanying the Pentagon's study of the Vietnam war, covering events in the Truman and Eisenhower Administrations. Except where excerpting is specified, the documents appear verbatim, with only unmistakable typographical errors corrected.

Report of Ho's Appeals to U.S. In '46 to Support Independence

Cablegram from an American diplomat in Hanoi, identified as Landon, to State Department, Feb. 27, 1946, as provided in the body of the Pentagon study.

Ho Chi Minh handed me 2 letters addressed to President of USA, China, Russia, and Britain identical copies of which were stated to have been forwarded to other governments named. In 2 letters to Ho Chi Minh request as one of United Nations to support idea of Annamese independence according to Philippines example, to examine the case of the Annamese, and to take steps necessary to maintenance of world peace which is being endangered by French efforts to reconquer Indochina. He asserts that Annamese will fight until United Nations interfered in support of Annamese independence. The petition addressed to major United Nations contains:

A. Review of French relations with Japanese where French Indochina allegedly aided Japs:

B. Statement of establishment on 2

September 1945 of PENW Democratic Republic of Viet Minh:

C. Summary of French conquest of Cochinchina began 23 Sept 1945 and still incomplete:

D. Outline of accomplishments of Annamese Government in Tonkin including popular elections, abolition of undesirable taxes, expansion of education and resumption as far as possible of normal economic activities:

E. Request to 4 powers: (1) to intervene and stop the war in Indochina in order to mediate fair settlement and (2) to bring the Indochinese issue before the United Nations organization. The petition ends with the statement that Annamese ask for full independence in fact and that in interim while awaiting UNO decision the Annamese will continue to fight the reestablishment of French imperialism. Letters and petition will be transmitted to Department soonest.

1952 Policy Statement by U.S. On Goals in Southeast Asia

Statement of Policy by the National Security Council, early 1952; on "United States Objectives and Courses of Action With Respect to Southeast Asia." According to a footnote, the document defined Southeast Asia as "the area embracing Burma, Thailand, Indochina, Malaya and Indonesia."

Objective

1. To prevent the countries of Southeast Asia from passing into the communist orbit, and to assist them to develop will and ability to resist communism from within and without and to contribute to the strengthening of the free world.

General Considerations

2. Communist domination, by whatever means, of all Southeast Asia would

seriously endanger in the short term, and critically endanger in the longer term, United States security interests.

a. The loss of any of the countries of Southeast Asia to communist aggression would have critical psychological, political and economic consequences. In the absence of effective and timely counteraction, the loss of any single country would probably lead to relatively swift submission to or an alignment with communism of the rest of

South
long
the
Pakis
prob
wides
the st
b. C
east
in the
carious
funda
the Pa
c. S
and in
source
produc
tegitical
rice ex
critical
and Ho
signific
imports

d. Th
specially of Malaya and Indonesia, could result in such economic and political pressures in Japan as to make it extremely difficult to prevent Japan's eventual accommodation to communism.

3. It is therefore imperative that an overt attack on Southeast Asia by the Chinese Communists be vigorously opposed. In order to pursue the military courses of action envisaged in this paper to a favorable conclusion within a reasonable period, it will be necessary to divert military strength from other areas thus reducing our military capability in those areas, with the recognized increased risks involved therein, or to increase our military forces in being, or both.

4. The danger of an overt military attack against Southeast Asia is inherent in the existence of a hostile and aggressive Communist China, but such an attack is less probable than continued communist efforts to achieve domination through subversion. The primary threat to Southeast Asia accordingly arises from the possibility that the situation in Indochina may deteriorate as a result of the weakening of the resolve of, or as a result of the inability of the governments of France and of the Associated States to continue to oppose the Viet Minh rebellion, the military strength of which is being steadily increased by virtue of aid furnished by the Chinese Communist regime and its allies.

5. The successful defense of Tonkin is critical to the retention in non-Communist hands of mainland Southeast Asia. However, should Burma come under communist domination, a communist might make Indochina, including Tonkin, militarily indefensible. The execution of

The Government vs. the Press

It was, sighed one Federal appeals judge last week, like asking the courts to "ride herd on a swarm of bees with a pencil." The matter at hand was the government's unprecedented attempt to suppress publication of data from the top-secret Pentagon study of the war in Vietnam. But even as the case labored upward to a momentous showdown in the Supreme Court, the bees got loose—at least ten more newspapers and one congressman joined The New York Times and The Washington Post at spilling secrets—and the Nixon Administration got stung. It had, for its pains, succeeded mainly in making itself look at once oppressive (for breaching the ancient American taboo against censorship in advance) and inept (for picking a fight it could not win whatever the verdict). The nine Justices assembled in extraordinary session at the weekend. But the great Constitutional collision had by then dissolved into fiasco, and the Administration was already looking for graceful ways out.

The dawning discovery was that the whole exercise had been not only legally shaky but politically bootless as well. A NEWSWEEK poll, conducted by The Gallup Organization, showed a widespread feeling that both the press and the government sometimes go too far in the continuing contest over secret information—and that, in a crunch, Americans worry more about national security than freedom of the press (page 18). But, by 48 to 33 per cent, they disapproved of the Administration's attempt to bottle up the Pentagon papers by court order. Worse still, the court fight shifted the focus of controversy away from the mistakes and deceptions of the Kennedy-Johnson war years—and onto Mr. Nixon's misadventures at censorship. Some Administration insiders thereupon began offering the line that it was Attorney General John Mitchell's fault—that he had given the President bad advice and that the White House was taking political charge of the matter. The new management quickly began de-escalating. The main object now, said one Nixon aide, was "to get out of the line of fire."

It was too late to get all the way out.

The government had little choice but to press its two original cases through the U.S. Courts of Appeals (where it lost a round to the Post and won a partial victory against the Times) and on to the dramatic denouement in the Supreme Court in the last days of its term. And Mitchell's men dutifully got a third court order against The Boston Globe when it too began printing stories out of the Pentagon archive. But their taste for combat flagged when still more papers from Mi-

potentially explosive select-committee inquiry into the history of the war this fall. The President himself sought to mollify tempers by sending Congress two copies of the 47-volume study, though with the understanding that it would still be kept secret. The White House, meanwhile, disclosed that Mr. Nixon had issued a Jan. 15 order (itself secret till now) directing all agencies to review their classification procedures with an eye toward making more information public. The

Pentagon said it was rereading the Vietnam history in light of that directive and would declassify some of it within 90 days; in court, government lawyers halved the time, to 45 days.

Secrets: The din of combat stole the headlines from what the papers disclosed—and, truth to tell, none of the new secrets quite matched the first eyebrow-raising inferences in the Times that the Johnson Administration had planned all its escalations months in advance and had lied to Congress and the public about them. Several of the new leaks (page 19) documented how Kennedy Administration officials at points encouraged and in the end acquiesced in the coup in which South Vietnam's President Ngo Dinh Diem was overthrown and murdered in 1963. The Los Angeles Times disclosed that a State Department expert on Vietnam had advised earlier that year that the U.S. "get out honorably" while it still could; Robert Kennedy took up this line later, according to Rep. Paul McCloskey, who had his own cache of secrets, but both doubters were overridden. The Boston Globe discov-



—Herblock, in The Washington Post

"Follow That Car—And That One—And That One—"

ered that, when Lyndon Johnson announced his abdication in March 1968, he was already working on plans for a Vietnamization policy much like the one Mr. Nixon began instituting a year later.

None of this was very surprising. But just as the store of secrets seemed to be running thin, Daniel Ellsberg, the 40-year-old former Pentagon analyst suspected of leaking them to the Times in the first place, suddenly resurfaced for a taped interview with CBS-TV's Walter Cronkite—and ventured that the most painful revelations were even yet to

ami to Los Angeles splashed their own VIET SECRETS; the government did get an order against The St. Louis Post-Dispatch but ignored most of the others.

At the same time, Mr. Nixon moved to quiet the rising furor over the study and its top-secret classification. Capitol Hill was angry at having seen it first in the papers; a House subcommittee began hearings last week on secrecy in government (one early witness ventured that 99½ per cent of all the Pentagon's classified files could safely be made public), and the Senate geared up for a